DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

TO: ALL COUNTY PERFORMANCE SAMPLE WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: WERNER SCHINK
                     Acting Deputy Director
                     Program Planning and Performance Division

SUBJECT: ACCESS TO THE INTERNET

        The purpose of this letter is to notify the counties in our County Performance Sample (CPS) of our intention of making the Internet our main base of operations for communication and for the electronic storage of our survey software. Currently our Quality Control Information System (QCIS) is labor intensive for both county and state staff. We would like to create a more efficient and convenient system for all of us by making greater use of the Internet. The purpose of this letter is to seek your cooperation in ensuring that all staff who use QCIS have access to the Internet by May 1, 1999.

        The remainder of this letter provides more detail on how we are planning to use the Internet in the short- and long-term for future enhancements to QCIS.

Reference Material and Other Communication on the Internet

        The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is taking steps to place all communication regarding QCIS on the Internet. Currently, state staff's written communication with county staff is conducted in the form of letters, transmittals, bulletins and other documents. This system is labor intensive because it requires duplicating and sending copies to all counties. County staff must then make copies and route to all appropriate line staff. Timeliness has been a concern in the current process and timely communication has suffered.

        We plan to change this paper system by placing our communication on the Internet. The transmittals, memos and the notifications of changes to the software are among the products that we will place on the Internet in the near future. We have already taken steps to place the "Q5 User's Guide" and the "Q5 Profile of Classes" on the CDSS home page. In the coming weeks we will be placing additional products there for your use. We will notify the appropriate county staff as we add new products to our website.

Automated Software on the Internet

Our longer range plan is to place the QCIS software on the Internet. Currently, each time the Department releases revisions to the software, we must reproduce diskettes for all users. Not only is it time consuming to duplicate the diskettes, but it is also a labor intensive process at each county to load all computers with the new software.

With the software on the Internet the survey software will no longer be housed in each user's computer. We will update the software at a single location, and all users will automatically have the latest version when they log on to the system.

I look forward to the changes in the upcoming months that will transform the way the CPS counties and CDSS collect and process data. If you have any questions or suggestions on our proposal, please call Lois VanBeers, of my staff, at (916) 654-1792, or send her an e-mail message at lvanbeer@dss.ca.gov.

c: Bruce Wagstaff
   Quality Control (QC) Supervisors
   Gary Swanson
   Lois VanBeers